



**VEDHIK**  
**IAS ACADEMY**  
*The New Learning Mantra*

# VEDHIK

**DAILY NEWS ANALYSIS**

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## FOREWORD

We, at Team Vedhik is happy to introduce a new initiative - "Vedhik - Daily News Analysis (DNA)\_The Hindu" compilations to help you with UPSC Civil Services Examination preparation. We believe this initiative - "Vedhik - Daily News Analysis (DNA)\_The Hindu " would help students, especially beginners save time and streamline their preparations with regard to Current Affairs. A content page and an Appendix has been added segregating and mapping the content to the syllabus.

It is an appreciable efforts by Vedhik IAS Academy helping aspirants of UPSC Civil Services Examinations. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Babu Sebastian, former VC - MG University in extending all support to this endeavour. Finally I also extend my thanks to thank Ms. Shilpa Sasidharan and Mr. Shahul Hameed for their assistance in the preparing the compilations.

We welcome your valuable comments so that further improvement may be made in the forthcoming material. We look forward to feedback, comments and suggestions on how to improve and add value for students. Every care has been taken to avoid typing errors and if any reader comes across any such error, the authors shall feel obliged if they are informed at their Email ID.

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# Modi calls for road map to develop Mangarh Dham as a global tribal destination

**The Hindu Bureau**  
JAIPUR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday called for preparing a road map to develop Mangarh Dham in Rajasthan's Banswara district as a tribal destination with a prominent identity at the global level. Mangarh Dham, situated near the Rajasthan-Gujarat boundary, is known for the massacre of tribespeople by the British Indian Army in 1913.

Addressing a public meeting at Mangarh Dham to mark the anniversary of the incident and commemorate tribal leader and social reformer Govind Guru, Mr. Modi said the memorial raised at the place was a symbol of bravery and sacrifice of tribal people.

He said such an impactful event of the freedom struggle had not found its place in the history books because of "unfortunate circumstances".

Nearly 1,500 Bhil tribals



The development of Mangarh Dham will make this area a place of inspiration for the new generation

**NARENDRA MODI**

and forest dwellers were killed in a hill in Mangarh on November 17, 1913, when the British Indian Army opened fire on the protesters who were demanding abolition of bonded labour system and relaxation in heavy agricultural taxes imposed by the rulers of princely states. The tribes in the southern Rajasthan region were led by Govind Guru.

## **Shared heritage**

Mr. Modi said since Mangarh Dham was a shared heritage of the people of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, the governments of the four States could

work together and prepare a road map to bring the memorial site on the world map. "The development of Mangarh Dham will make this area a place of inspiration for the new generation," he said.

The Prime Minister refrained from declaring Mangarh Dham as a monument of national importance, the demand for which was raised by Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot. Mr. Modi, who shared the dais with Mr. Gehlot as well as Chief Ministers Shivraj Singh Chouhan of Madhya Pradesh and Bhupendra Patel of Gujarat, said if the memorial was taken to a new height, it could be called a national monument or any other name could be given to it.

The elected representatives of the tribal-dominated areas in Banswara and Dungarpur districts have been demanding since long that Mangarh Dham be declared a monument of national importance.

# CAA is an internal matter of India: Bangladesh Minister

Hasan Mahmud says fanatical groups are working to undermine social harmony; Hindus in Bangladesh should not be considered minorities as they belong to the mainstream of the country

**Kallol Bhattacharjee**  
NEW DELHI

**B**angladesh Information Minister Hasan Mahmud on Tuesday said the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) framed to grant Indian citizenship to minorities of Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan was an “internal matter” of India. There were fanatical groups in both Bangladesh and India working to “undermine social harmony”, he added.

At a press conference at the Press Club of India, Mr. Mahmud, a veteran Awami League leader, reiterated Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s comments on the Hindu minority in Bangladesh, and said Hindus in Bangladesh should not be regarded as a minority community as they belonged to the national mainstream.



**In conversation:** Hasan Mahmud (centre) addressing the media at the Press Club of India on Tuesday. TWITTER/@PCITWEETS

“CAA is your internal matter, and with the fact that an appeal has been submitted in the Supreme Court, it has also become a legal issue,” Mr. Mahmud said in response to a question from *The Hindu*.

He refused to delve deep into the issue as the matter was now before the court. The comment on the CAA reflects the steady position of Bangladesh on the legislation enacted in 2019 but remains unimple-

mented as the rules for it has not been framed.

## Dhaka’s record

Mr. Mahmud strongly defended Dhaka’s record regarding minority rights, and said Hindu festivals were celebrated freely in his country. “According to our Constitution, everybody has equal rights. But there are some fanatical groups both in India and Bangladesh that try to ignite fanaticism and try to

destabilise the harmony across religious groups. Our government has taken tough measures in the past couple of years against such miscreants and we have seen the festive manner in which Durga Puja has taken place in Bangladesh this year,” he said.

He said 700 more Durga Puja pandals were erected in 2022 than those in 2021. “This was because the Government of Bangladesh has ensured security and safety of the people who follow the Hindu religion,” he said. Bangladesh witnessed communal violence during the festival in 2021 when mobs attacked puja pandals in Brahmanbaria, Comilla, Rangpur and in parts of Chittagong.

He praised India for its contribution to the 1971 war, and acknowledged the support that Bangladesh received from India during the COVID-19 crisis.

# At SCO meet, Jaishankar targets BRI

India stayed out of the joint communique reference to China's Belt and Road Initiative, while all other member states affirmed support for it

**Sahasini Haidar**  
NEW DELHI

Connectivity projects must respect sovereignty issues, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said, in a reference to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), at a virtual meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Heads of Government hosted by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang on Tuesday.

Dr. Jaishankar pitched for more trade through Iran's Chabahar port and the International North South Transport Corridors that India is a part of, aiming to improve bilateral trade with Central Asian countries. A communique issued after the meeting named all countries, other than India, and said they



**Trade pitch:** S. Jaishankar addresses the 21st meeting of the Heads of Government of Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation on Tuesday. @DRSJAISHANKAR/TWITTER

“reaffirmed their support for the ‘Belt and Road’ initiative”, “including the work to promote the alignment of the ‘Belt and Road’ construction with the construction of the Eurasian Economic Union”.

“Our total trade with SCO Members is only \$141 billion, which has potential to increase manifold. Fair market access is to our mutual benefit and only way to move forward,” Dr. Jaishankar said at the meet which

included Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin, and the Prime Ministers of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The bulk of India's trade

with SCO countries is with China, which crossed \$100 billion this year.

In a series of tweets outlining his speech, Dr. Jaishankar took aim at China's BRI saying, “Connectivity projects should respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of member states and respect international law.” India has refused to join the BRI, comprising a series of infrastructure projects that pass through Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia, and has been developing and promoting the Shahid Beheshti terminal at Chabahar and the link through the INSTC as an alternative to both the BRI and to transit trade through Pakistan.

“[I] underlined that we need better connectivity in the SCO region built on centrality of interests of

Central Asian states. [This] will unlock the economic potential of this region in which Chabahar port and the International North South Transport Corridor could become enablers,” Dr. Jaishankar tweeted.

Without referring directly to the Ukraine war, and Russia's decision to halt the grain initiative, Dr. Jaishankar said that India will “foster greater cooperation with SCO member states on countering the food crisis”, particularly with millets. In the SCO joint communique, all countries also criticised the “imposition of unilateral economic sanctions not endorsed by the UN Security Council”, and said the sanctions “adversely affect” the global economy, without naming U.S. and European Union sanctions on Russia.

# The second coming

## Lula will have to negotiate his way past Brazil's status quoist elites

**T**hree years ago, he was in prison over corruption charges. Today, he is the President-elect of South America's largest country. The story of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, a former two-term President of Brazil and leader of the leftist Workers Party (PT), is one of the most astonishing comebacks in contemporary Latin American politics. When 99.5% of votes were counted, Lula, as he is popularly known, had won 50.9% votes, defeating the incumbent Jair Bolsonaro, who got 49.1%. Mr. Bolsonaro, a far-right populist who presided over Brazil's rightward shift in the past five years, had done better than most pollsters expected in the first round. But in the run-off, when the voters were offered two contrasting choices – one representing a cocktail of ultra-nationalism, conservatism and free market policies and the other promising inclusive and sustainable development anchored in social liberalism – they chose the latter. Mr. Bolsonaro has none but himself to blame. An admirer of Brazil's brutal military dictatorship, he oversaw a disastrous governmental response to COVID-19, which caused some 7,00,000 deaths, and shrinking economic opportunities. If Mr. Bolsonaro rose to power attacking Brazil's left, after his five years in power, for many Brazilians, the PT rule was an era of better days. What the Brazilian Left wanted was a leader. And they got one again in Lula, after his corruption convictions were annulled by the Supreme Court.

When Lula was in power between 2003 and 2010, his policies lifted some 25 million Brazilians out of poverty. He focused on growth and welfare and chose a cooperative model that sought coexistence rather than confrontation with the country's aristocracy while pushing for incremental redistribution. As in the past, Lula returns to power when a pink tide is sweeping through the Americas. Most of the major countries in the continent are now ruled by Leftists. While Lula will find a favourable regional environment, his biggest challenge would be to live up to the expectations of Brazilians. He will inherit a different Brazil today. The commodity boom that funded his ambitious welfare programme last time is no longer there. The slowdown in China, Brazil's biggest trading partner, has hurt the economy, which is expected to grow only 0.6% next year. This, along with Mr. Bolsonaro's mismanagement and the economic effects of COVID-19, has led to a sharp rise in poverty and hunger, affecting some 33 million people. Lula would also face resistance from a hostile Congress, where conservatives still remain strong. The road ahead is bumpy, but his record shows that he is a clever politician and an able administrator who might well be able to negotiate his way past Brazil's status quoist elites to bring about incremental changes.

# Factory output weakens on wider slowdown, China's curbs

**Reuters**

WASHINGTON/LONDON

Global factory output weakened in October as widespread recession fears, high inflation and China's zero-COVID policy hurt demand, business surveys showed on Tuesday, adding to persistent supply disruptions and darkening recovery prospects.

Inflation has soared globally as supply chains healing from the pandemic were hit by Russia's Ukraine invasion, forcing con-

sumers to curb purchases.

U.S. manufacturing activity grew at its slowest pace since the depths of the first COVID lockdown in May 2020 last month as the Federal Reserve's aggressive push to raise interest rates to quash stubbornly high inflation cools demand for goods.

The Institute for Supply Management (ISM) said on Tuesday that its manufacturing PMI fell to 50.2 from 50.9 in September. But the ISM's new orders sub-index rose to 49.2 from 47.1

in September, indicating some resiliency among U.S. consumers.

## **Output shrinks in U.K.**

British manufacturing also suffered its biggest contraction since May 2020 last month, suggesting a deepening slowdown was underway.

The S&P Global UK Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) fell to 46.2 from 48.4 in September, further below the 50-point mark separating growth from a contraction.

# Kremlin accuses U.K. of ‘directing’ Nord Stream blasts

There is evidence that Britain is involved in the ‘terrorist attack’, says Russia; London says the allegations are ‘detached from reality’

**Agence France-Presse**  
MOSCOW

**T**he Kremlin on Tuesday accused Britain of “directing and coordinating” explosions on the Nord Stream gas pipelines.

“Our intelligence services have data indicating that British military specialists were directing and coordinating the attack,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists.

“There is evidence that Britain is involved in sabotage, in a terrorist attack on vital energy infrastructure, not Russian, but international.”

He did not provide any details but insisted that the West should “carefully” analyse Moscow’s information.

“We expect that despite the unacceptable silence of the European countries, this analysis will nevertheless be carried out,” he said, adding that Russia would also consider further steps.



**Pitched battle:** Ukrainian servicemen near armoured vehicles at the frontline town of Bakhmut in Ukraine’s Donetsk on Sunday. AFP

London has rejected the accusations.

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak’s spokesman said on Tuesday London would not be drawn into “distractions which are part of the Russian playbook”.

On Monday, Foreign Secretary James Cleverly told Parliament that Russian allegations against the U.K. were “increasingly detached from reality”.

“They are designed to distract the Russian people

from the reality of Russian failures on the battlefield,” he told members of Parliament.

Explosions in late September sent natural gas bubbling up from the pipelines on the floor of the Baltic Sea to the surface in a major environmental disaster. Moscow has accused Western countries of being behind the explosions of the pipelines, built to carry Russian gas to Germany, but has not provided any firm proof.

# Independence key to quality elections, says poll commissioner

**The Hindu Bureau**

NEW DELHI

Maintaining independence is key to ensuring quality in the conduct of polls, Election Commissioner Anup Chandra Pandey said on Tuesday. He called for collective action on the part of the election management bodies (EMBs) all over the world to strengthen democratic processes.

Mr. Pandey was speaking at the conclusion of a two-day international conference on the “Role, framework and capacity of EMBs” organised by the Election Commission (EC).

Though elections are key to democracy, the quality of functional efficiency of conducting elections by the EMBs, in turn, depended on their effectiveness in addressing the challenges and maintaining independence, he said.

While highlighting emerging challenges, Mr. Pandey emphasised the need for mutual coopera-



Global standards need to be developed on the management of electoral rolls, polling management

**ANUP CHANDRA PANDEY**

Election Commissioner

tion, continuous engagement and knowledge-sharing among global EMBs in a regular, structured manner to address them.

Global standards and standard operating procedures need to be developed on the management of electoral rolls, polling management and technology, he said. Steps should be taken to control disinformation to ensure free, fair and transparent elections. More democracies must be brought on board involving and engaging them in “strengthening electoral democracy”, he added.

# Mulling remote vote facility for NRIs, govt. tells SC

## **The Hindu Bureau**

NEW DELHI

The Union government in the Supreme Court on Tuesday said it was considering ways to facilitate non-resident Indians (NRI) to cast their votes remotely while ensuring the integrity of the electoral process.

A Bench led by Chief Justice U.U. Lalit was hearing several petitions, including one filed by V.P. Shamsheer, a UAE-based doctor represented by advocate Haris Beeran, to allow NRIs to vote through postal ballots.

Initially, the Bench said making the postal ballot facility available to soldiers serving in far-flung areas across the country was different from affording the same facility to someone who had chosen to reside abroad. The court, however, acknowledged that migrant labourers would often find it beyond their limited means to fly in just to cast their vote.

Allowing NRIs to vote from abroad may see expatriates – a bulk of whom are migrant labourers, mostly from Kerala, Tamil Nadu and northern parts

of the country – emerge as a decisive force in the country's electoral politics.

The court noted that the government was aware of the issue and had even introduced a Bill to amend the Representation of the People Act to allow overseas Indians to vote by proxy. The Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill had, however, lapsed with the dissolution of the 16th Lok Sabha. The court asked Attorney-General R. Venkataramani whether the government was considering the option of digital voting.

# The truth about 'the India story'

**A**s the COVID-19 pandemic fades and hopes rise for nations and societies to return to some kind of normalcy, there is effort all around to take stock of where we stand and what our prospects look like. It is in this spirit that I want to look back over the last few years at how India performed in terms of its economy.

These are polarising times and one hears some arguing that the Indian economy is doing dismally, and others chanting that it is a blazing success. The truth lies somewhere in between. It is true that the Indian rupee has been doing very poorly (especially in comparison to the stated target of our political leaders to strengthen it) and inflation, at 7.41%, is high, but these are global problems. Virtually all currencies are losing out against the U.S. dollar, and inflation right now is a global phenomenon.

Where India is doing especially poorly is in employment generation. India's unemployment rate is high. In October, it stood at 7.8%. However, what is really worrying is youth unemployment. According to International Labour Organization (ILO) data, collated and presented by the World Bank, India's youth unemployment, that is, from among people aged 15 to 24 years who are looking for work, the percent that does not find any, stands at 28.3%. This places India in the cluster of troubled West Asian nations such as Iran (27.2%), Egypt (24.3%) and Syria (26.2%), and in a much worse state than most Asian countries such as Indonesia (16%), Malaysia (15.6%), and Bangladesh (14.7%).

## The growth story is mixed

India's growth story is more mixed. In 2021-22, its GDP growth was 8.7%, which was among the highest in the world. This is good but, against this, we must offset the fact that much of this is the growth of climbing out of the pit into which we had fallen the previous year. In 2020-21, India's growth was minus 6.6%, which placed the country in the bottom half of the global growth chart. For 2022-23, the International Monetary Fund has cut India's growth forecast to 6.1%. There are two special worries related to this. First, given that most of India's growth is occurring at the top end, with a few corporations raking in a disproportionate share of profits, and unemployment is so high, it is likely that large segments of the population are actually witnessing negative growth. The second worry is



**Kaushik Basu**

is Professor of Economics and Carl Marks Professor of International Studies, Department of Economics and SC Johnson College of Business, Cornell University, Ithaca and New York

What makes India's growth story worrying is that the slowdown began much before the COVID-19 pandemic

not so much about India's dropping rank in the world, as about how India's performance has been sliding compared to its own past performance.

The short story of India's growth is the following. After sluggish growth for about four decades after Independence, India's growth picked up in the early 1990s, following the reform of 1991-93. From 2003, it rose again, and India joined the ranks of the Asian super performers. From 2005 to 2008, it was being acclaimed globally for being on top of most charts. For three consecutive years, India grew at, respectively, 9.3%, 9.2% and 10.2%.

It must be pointed out that in recent years, the official Indian estimates for these years have been revised downwards. The latest Economic Survey has cut these growth rates to 7.9%, 8.0%, 8.0%. But, even with that, India stood out. In fact, from 2003 to 2011, barring one year, the start of the Great Recession in 2008-09, India was on top of most global rankings in terms of growth performance.

What makes the current situation dire is not that India grew slower than a majority of nations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Those were troubled times, and nations were often, understandably, caught on the wrong foot.

What makes India's growth story worrying is that the slowdown began much before the COVID-19 pandemic. It began in 2016, after which, for four consecutive years, the growth rate each year was lower than in the previous year. Growth in 2016-17 was 8.3%. After that it was, respectively, 6.9%, 6.6%, 4.8%, and minus 6.6%. This downward spiral stretching over four years has never happened before in India since its independence in 1947.

Why is this happening? If we look at India's policy interventions over the last six or seven years, there have been good and bad moves. India needed to make it easier for bankrupt firms to close down and move on. Without this, business was sluggish. Hence, it was good to see the new Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code the nation adopted in 2016. On the other hand, the demonetisation of 2016 was a big mistake. Much has been written about this. Let me not expend more time on it.

## India's investment rate

I want to instead turn to one reason behind India's poor growth performance over the last six

years that has been largely overlooked. We know from textbook economics models that one of the most important drivers of growth is the investment rate, that is, the fraction of the national income that is spent on investment – roads, bridges, factories, even human capital. For long years, India used to have a low investment rate, and, in keeping with textbook economics, India had slow growth.

Then the investment rate began a slow rise and crossed the 30% mark for the first time in 2004-05. By 2007-08, it had reached 39.1%. India was, for the first time, looking like an East Asian super-performer; and it was growing faster than the super performers. The investment rate remained just short of 40% for six years and then began to fall. By 2019-20, it had fallen to 32.2%.

No one fully understands what determines the investment rate. It has many drivers. Monetary policy matters, as does fiscal policy. In addition, how much people invest depends on social and political factors.

It is arguable that trust is a major driver of investment. As the level of trust erodes in a society, investment tends to fall.

We will need more research to know what is causing India's investment rate to fall. However, given the rise of political polarisation and the policy of divide and rule, it is likely that societal trust is eroding and this is reducing the investment rate. In turn, the falling investment rate is adversely impacting growth and hurting job creation.

## Needed, a policy refocus

Given India's strong fundamentals and abundance of talent, there is no reason why such a vast expanse of the economy should be languishing, with so many people witnessing a contraction in their incomes. We do need to shift the policy focus from a few rich corporations to the larger segments of population – small businesses, farmers and ordinary labourers. There is a need for fiscal policy interventions to transfer income from the super-rich to these segments. There is ample space for this since inequality in India has risen disproportionately over the last few years. Finally, even though a divided society is easier to rule, we have to pull back from this and create an ethos of inclusion and trust, the erosion of which is slowing down investment and adversely impacting job creation and growth.

# India factory output growth, new orders ease to 4-month lows: PMI

Survey of manufacturers shows October job creation fastest in almost three years; inflation rates stayed below trend helping boost producers' optimism about future prospects including seeing demand buoyancy staying sustained

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

India's manufacturing production growth and new orders eased to four-month lows in October, but a surge in new jobs and subdued price pressures kept producers optimistic about future prospects, the S&P Global India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) survey shows.

The seasonally adjusted PMI was mildly higher at 55.3, compared with September's 55.1, but remained above its long-run average, indicating a stronger improvement in the manufacturing sector's

## Optimism gains

Subdued price pressures buoy producers' outlook



■ Overall cost inflation was second-weakest in two years

■ Firms limited output price increases to slowest pace since February 2022

■ Manufacturers confident of rise in output volumes by October 2023

health, S&P Global said.

"The upward movement in the headline figure largely reflected stronger increases in employment and stocks of purchases," the firm said, noting that

export orders growth picked up pace even as overall factory orders rose the slowest since June.

Outstanding business volumes hit a two-year high and some firms res-

ponded by hiring extra workers, the firm said, signalling that manufacturing jobs likely grew at one of the strongest rates since March 2005.

"Consumer goods emerged as the brightest area of the manufacturing sector in October," the research firm said. "Firms in this segment signalled the fastest increases in output, overall sales and exports."

The overall rate of cost inflation was the second-weakest for two years, spurring producers to limit output price increases, which grew at the slowest pace since February. Indian manufacturers remained confident of a rise

in output volumes by October 2023, although the overall level of sentiment fell to a three-month low.

### 'Loosen purse strings'

Despite the loss in growth momentum, factory orders and output grew strongly, noted Pollyanna De Lima, economics associate director at S&P Global Market Intelligence.

"Manufacturers continued to loosen the purse strings as they expect demand buoyancy to be sustained. There was a marked rise in input purchasing, with firms adding to their inventories to better align with client purchasing," Ms. De Lima said.

# October's GST revenue crosses ₹1.51 lakh crore

Festive season spurs second highest revenues from domestic transactions in a month; Haryana recorded the highest uptick of 37%, while the national average stood at 18% during October

**Vikas Dhoot**  
NEW DELHI

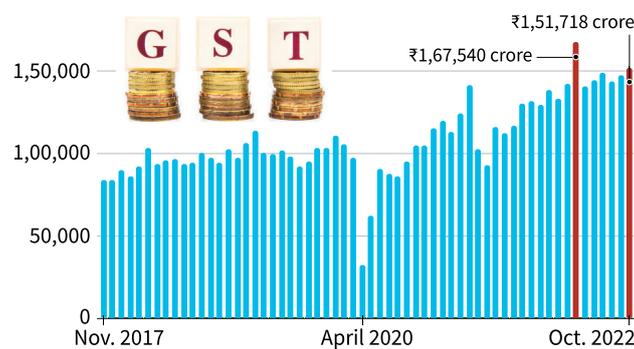
India's gross GST revenue touched ₹1,51,718 crore in October, 16.6% higher than a year ago, marking the second highest monthly collections since the launch of the indirect tax regime.

Revenue from domestic transactions, including imports of services, increased 18% during the month, with the Finance Ministry stating that October marked the second highest collection from domestic transactions "next only to April 2022".

While the government did not share the overall revenue growth from import of goods for October, Integrated GST (IGST) collected on goods imports grew 13.02% over last October,

## Second best

The monthly gross GST revenue in October 2022 — ₹1,51,718 crore — is second only to the ₹1,67,540 crore collected in April 2022



while GST Cess inflows on such imports rose 18.02%.

"This is the ninth month, and for eight months in a row now, that the monthly GST revenues have been more than the ₹1.4 lakh crore mark," the Ministry said.

During September,

whose transactions are reflected in October's revenues, 8.3 crore e-way bills were generated, which the Ministry said "was significantly higher" than 7.7 crore bills generated a month earlier.

There were significant variations among major

States' revenues during the month.

While Haryana recorded a 37% uptick, followed by Karnataka (33%), Kerala (29%), West Bengal (26%) and Tamil Nadu (25%), revenues grew slower than the national average in Gujarat and Telangana (11%), Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan (10%) and Uttar Pradesh (16%).

Six States clocked negative growth, year-on-year, including Chhatisgarh (-3%), Assam (-13%), Mizoram and Manipur (-23% each) and Bihar (-1%). The erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir clocked a sharp 34% drop in revenues, even as they jumped 74% in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

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# October's GST revenue crosses ₹1.51 lakh crore

“October 2022 reflects a combination of quarter-end flows relating to the transactions in the previous month, as well as the surge in GST e-way bills ahead of a robust festive season,” said ICRA chief economist Aditi Nayar.

Commenting on the dip in GST revenues' growth rate from September's 26% to 16.6% in October, she said this was “expected given the normalising base, and may continue in the next few months”.

“We continue to expect the CGST collections to exceed this year's Budget estimates by ₹1.3-1.4 lakh crore,” Ms. Nayar said.

Abhishek Jain, partner (indirect tax) for KPMG in India, attributed the higher collections to festive spending and said collections could rise further through the festive season.

Central GST (CGST) revenues for the month were ₹26,039 crore, while the State GST (SGST) kitty was ₹33,396 crore. IGST revenues were ₹81,778 crore, including ₹37,297 crore collected on import of goods, and GST Cess collections were ₹10,505 crore, including ₹825 crore from goods imports.

The highest GST collections in a month were recorded in April this year, at ₹1,67,540 crore.

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# Saffron fields turn stage for tourist shots

J&K Tourism Department ropes in students and farmers to turn the saffron harvest festival into a tourist experience in the Valley; locals hope to see a 15% increase in yield this year

**Peerzada Ashiq**  
PAMPORE

**W**earing traditional attire and recreating the look of 16th century Kashmiri poet and queen Habba Khatoon, students from Pampore in south Kashmir on Tuesday put the spotlight on the ongoing saffron harvest to attract tourists for social media reels and unique experiences amid the elevated table-land known for one of the costliest spices in the country.

“These *karewas* (elevated table land) are home to Habba Khatoon. I am wearing the traditional attire to imitate our queen. Saffron has not only been a crop of Kashmir but also a source of poetry. We hope tourists



**Harvest time:** Nearly 30,000 families living in as many as 226 villages in J&K are associated with the spice business. NISSAR AHMAD

will enjoy the harvest season,” Zeenat, a student Pampore, said.

## Family business

The tourism department had invited students and local farmers to join the saffron festival organised in Pampore’s Ladoo area

on Tuesday to highlight the process of saffron cultivation. Traditional songs, sung in chorus while picking these flowers, were also played on the occasion.

These days, rows of purple flowers of saffron, a spice widely used across the country, dot the vast

undulated highlands of Pampore. There is a festive look with hundreds of family members joining hands to pick the flowers and separate the petals from stigmas, thread-like parts. Around 30,000 families living in 226 villages in J&K, about 90% of them in Pampore, are associated with the spice business.

“We started to collect the saffron flowers early in the morning. It will be followed by separation of petals and sticks. Thereby, we are sun-drying it till the stigmas attain a particular shape,” Ibrahim Nabi, a lawyer by profession, said.

Mr. Nabi is joined by his sister who is a student, and his mother, a house-wife, to pick the flowers, like hundreds of other landowners in Pampore.

# The C-295 and India's aircraft industry

How significant is the setting up of the C-295 transport aircraft manufacturing facility in Vadodara to India's domestic industry? Which are the major companies within India's growing civil aviation sector? How will the procurement of new aircraft boost the defence manufacturing ecosystem?

## EXPLAINER

Dinakar Peri

### The story so far:

On October 30, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the C-295 transport aircraft manufacturing facility in Vadodara to be set up by Airbus Defence and Space and Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL). This is the first time a private sector company would be manufacturing a full aircraft in the country. This is a huge step forward for India in the global aircraft manufacturing domain.

### What is the C-295MW transporter?

The C-295MW is a transport aircraft of 5-10 tonne capacity which will replace the legacy Avro aircraft in the Indian Air Force (IAF) procured in the 1960s. The Request For Proposal (RFP) was issued to global firms in May 2013 and the sole bid by Airbus and TASL was approved by the Defence Acquisition Council in May 2015. On September 24, 2021 the Ministry of Defence (MoD) signed a ₹21,935 crore contract with Airbus Defence and Space for the acquisition of 56 C-295MW aircraft along with associated equipment.

In the words of N. Chandrasekaran, Chairman of Tata Sons, with the set-up of the final assembly line in Vadodara, the Tata Group will now be able to take aluminium ingots at one end of the value stream and turn it into an Airbus C-295 aircraft for the IAF.

Of the 56 aircraft contracted, 16 will come in fly-away condition from Spain between September 2023 and August 2025. The remaining 40 will be manufactured here to be delivered between September 2026 and 2031 at the rate of eight aircraft per year. Nearly 240 engineers will be trained at the Airbus facility in Spain for the project, the MoD said. The C-295 has very good fuel efficiency and can take off and land from short as well as unprepared runways, according to Air Marshal Sandeep Singh, Vice Chief of IAF. The IAF will base its first C-295 squadron in Vadodara by converting the Avro squadron located there, as the fly-away aircraft start coming in, he stated.

With the procurement of these aircraft, India has become the 35th C-295 operator worldwide. With 285 aircraft ordered and 38 operators in 34 different countries, the aircraft has achieved more than 5,00,000 flight hours. The Navy and the Coast Guard have also expressed interest in the C-295 and it can be used in civilian roles as well as exported in the future. The C-295 is also a potential replacement for the AN-32 aircraft, the workhorse of the IAF with over 100 of them in service. To questions on this Air Marshal Singh said that the AN-32s will be in service upto 2032 and beyond and that they would make a decision on its replacement in five years or so from now.

### How will this affect the domestic aircraft manufacturing ecosystem?

Over the last two decades, Indian companies, both public and private, have steadily expanded their footprint in the global supply chains of major defence and aerospace manufacturers supplying a range of components, systems and sub-systems.

For instance, Boeing's sourcing from India stands at \$1 billion annually, of which over 60% is in manufacturing, through a growing network of 300+ supplier partners of which over 25% are micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME). "Boeing has the broadest and most capable engineering teams in the country with over 3,000 employees, and we're investing in a 43-



New skies: Employees at the Tata Boeing Aerospace Limited, working on aero-structures for AH-64 Apache attack helicopters, in Hyderabad. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

acre, \$200 million centre of excellence to further grow in the years to come," a company statement said. Tata in a joint venture (JV) with Boeing, manufactures aero-structures for its AH-64 Apache helicopter, including fuselages, secondary structures, vertical spar boxes fuselages and vertical fin structures for the 737 family of aircraft. It also makes Crown and Tail-cones for Boeing's CH-47 Chinook helicopters.

Similarly, Lockheed Martin has joint ventures with TASL in Hyderabad which has manufactured more than 180 empenages for the C-130J Super Hercules transport aircraft and delivered 157 S-92 helicopter cabins. The latter facility manufactures aerospace components for commercial helicopters and aircraft and has expanded to include aircraft engine components for aerospace industry companies as well. One of the JV's also began manufacturing complex fighter wings with over 70% of detail parts produced indigenously. The JVs till date have clocked \$600 million worth of exports and produced over \$200 million in Indian industry revenue.

The U.S. simplifying its export regulations for India, through a series of measures, has added further impetus to this, experts noted. As U.S. and India pursue the Indo-Pacific strategy, India's strengths coupled with U.S. and European technology prowess can be a force for good in the world, noted Kirit Upadhyaya, Founder INDUS Tech Council who works closely with companies in both countries.

The domestic defence manufacturing ecosystem will get a boost with the C-295 project as it will lead to the development of a strong private industrial aerospace ecosystem not only in and around Vadodara but across the country. Bengaluru and Hyderabad already have developed such aerospace and defence domains over the years. The C-295 project is expected to create more than 15,000 skilled direct and indirect jobs across the aerospace ecosystem, with more than 125 suppliers qualified on global quality standards across India. Manufacturing of over 13,400 detail parts, 4,600 sub-assemblies and all the seven major component assemblies will be undertaken in India, along with tools, jigs

and testers, Tata said.

### Is India's civil aviation sector growing?

India has a much bigger footprint in civil aviation manufacturing than defence, in addition to being a major market itself. Both Airbus and Boeing do significant sourcing from India for their civil programmes.

According to Airbus every commercial aircraft manufactured by them today is partly designed and made in India. "We buy manufactured parts and engineering services worth \$650 million every year from more than 45 Indian suppliers", the company said. Stating that India, which is moving ahead with the mantra of 'Make in India' and 'Make for the Globe', continues to enhance its potential by becoming a major manufacturer of transport planes, Mr. Modi said, "And I can visualise the day when the world's biggest passenger planes will also be manufactured in India and will also carry the tag of 'Make in India'."

Since 2007, Airbus has had a wholly domestic-owned design centre here which has more than 650 engineers who specialise in high-tech aeronautical engineering and work across both fixed- and rotary-

wing Airbus aircraft programmes. Airbus which has design, management and training centres in India, added, "Our centres have the capacity to skill more than 8,000 pilots and 2,000 engineers over the next 10 years with plans for further expansion."

Today in India, we have the world's fastest growing aviation sector and we are about to reach the top three countries in the world in terms of air traffic, Mr. Modi said. "Crores of new passengers are going to be air passengers in the next 4-5 years... It is estimated that in the coming 10-15 years, India will need about 2000 more passenger and cargo aircraft."

Another major growing area is Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) for which India can emerge as the regional hub, Ms. Upadhyaya remarked adding, "However, the private defence sector is still nascent and a conducive and stable regulatory and policy environment will be an important enabler." This moment is akin to the automobile clusters that have emerged in the country turning India into a major exporter of cars to the world. With the right momentum, a realistic roadmap and enabling policy framework, a similar story can be scripted to make the country a hub for aircraft manufacturing.



A file photo of the C-295MW transport aircraft. p11

## THE GIST

On October 30, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the C-295 transport aircraft manufacturing facility in Vadodara to be set up by Airbus Defence and Space and Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL).

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# The weakest link in the air pollution fight

In the fight against air pollution in the Indo-Gangetic Plain, there are several important protagonists, none more so than India's frontline environmental regulators, the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs), and the Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) in the Union Territories. Their primary role is to regulate emissions from point sources such as industries and power plants that contribute substantially to ambient air pollution in urban and rural areas. More recently, they have also been tasked with guiding cities in meeting targets under the National Clean Air Programme and spending Finance Commission grants for air quality improvements. In short, there is no future with clean air in which the SPCBs do not perform at the highest level possible.

## An enhanced mandate

The SPCBs were initially constituted under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974. Under the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, the SPCB mandate was expanded to include air quality management. Subsequently, several new environmental regulations added to their roles and functions. Unfortunately, this enhanced mandate has not been matched with increased capacity and capability in the Boards. As environmental indicators such as air quality and water quality worsen in many parts of the country, the Boards are evidently failing to effectively discharge their statutory mandate.

Over the years, several reports that have been published, including those by the parliamentary standing committee and government committees, have identified reasons for the poor performance of the SPCBs. In a recently published series of papers by the Centre for Policy Research, we find that many of these reasons continue to afflict the SPCBs. This article unpacks three key



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As key environmental indicators worsen across India, it is clear that State Pollution Control Boards and Pollution Control Committees are falling short in meeting their statutory mandate

institutional constraints under which SPCBs in the Indo-Gangetic Plain function, and discusses their implications on air quality governance in India.

## Board composition as conflict of interest

First, the composition of SPCBs is a matter of serious concern as important stakeholders and those with crucial expertise are missing in most States. Boards are multi-member bodies headed by a chairperson and a member-secretary. Their decisions and policies guide the day-to-day functioning of the organisation. Over 50% of the Board members across the 10 SPCBs and PCC studied represent potential polluters: local authorities, industries, and public sector corporations. They are subject to the SPCB's regulatory measures, and their overwhelming presence raises fundamental questions around conflicts of interest.

At the same time, scientists, medical practitioners, and academics constitute only 7% of the Board members. What is even more worrying is that most Boards do not meet the statutory requirement of having at least two Board members who have knowledge of, and experience in, air quality management. Given the scale and causes of air pollution in India, multi-disciplinary expertise is needed to tackle it; there must also be an explicit focus on health while designing air pollution policy. The lack of expertise and skewed representation of stakeholders on the Boards can only be a hindrance to effective policy making.

Second, the SPCB leadership – the chairperson and the member secretary – do not enjoy a long, stable, and full-time tenure. In many States, persons in these two posts hold an additional charge in other government departments. Data also show that several chairpersons and member secretaries have held their posts for less than a

year. For example, the shortest tenure for a chairperson has been 18 days (Chhattisgarh) and 15 days for a member secretary (Haryana and Uttar Pradesh). With the focus of the leadership of SPCB spread thin across multiple roles and their tenures being short, often they do not even have the time to understand their mandate fully before they are moved out. In such a scenario, long-term policy planning, strategic interventions and effective execution aimed at reducing air pollution substantially are extremely difficult.

## Staff running on empty

Third, the SPCBs are critically under-staffed. At least 40% of all sanctioned posts are vacant across nine SPCBs/PCCs for which there is data. Vacancy levels in technical positions are as high as 84% in Jharkhand, and over 75% in Bihar and Haryana. An inadequate staff strength forces the Boards to recast their priorities among their various functions. This has significant implications on pollution regulation as vital functions such as monitoring industrial compliance, initiating enforcement actions in case of violations, and standard setting are often not prioritised. Less staff strength also means weaker regulatory scrutiny and poor impact assessment. For example, given their workload, engineers in Bihar, Jharkhand, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh have less than a day to inspect, evaluate and decide on each consent application. With Board staff running on empty, this is clearly an unsustainable situation.

The institutional picture we paint is rather bleak. Unfortunately, it gets worse when one considers the massive mandate of the Boards on environmental issues beyond air quality. Without essential capacity, capability, expertise, and vision in our frontline regulators, sustained and substantial gains in air quality are virtually impossible.

# Invasive tree spreading in Mudumalai Tiger Reserve

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UDHAGAMANDALAM

An invasive species, *Senna spectabilis*, an exotic tree, has taken over between 800 hectares and 1,200 hectares of the buffer zones of the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) in the picturesque Nilgiris hill district. The Forest Department is coming up with a comprehensive strategy to tackle the invasive species, which continues to spread rapidly in the buffer zone.

Introduced as an ornamental species and for use as firewood from South and Central America, the species has become highly invasive in the Sigur plateau in both the core and buffer zones of the MTR.

## Native species hit

Over the last few years, its bright yellow flowers have become more visible across the Tiger Reserve. Conservationists say the invasive weed has a negative effect on local biodiversity, crowding out native species and limiting food availability for wildlife.

According to P. Arunkumar, Deputy Director, MTR (Buffer Zone), the Forest



**Threat to hills:** *Senna spectabilis* with its yellow flowers are now visible across the Mudumalai reserve. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Department estimates that the species has spread over 800-1,200 hectares of the buffer zone.

Local residents said the species seemed to be spreading faster over the last five years. The Forest Department is still demarcating areas where the species is spreading. According to officials, policy-level discussions are under way on Tamil Nadu Newsprint and Papers Limited (TNPL) plan to use wood from *Senna spectabilis* from the MTR for paper-making. They said the funds so raised would be used in eco-restoration to bring back native species.

Mr. Arunkumar said the Forest Department was also formulating a 10-year plan to systematically re-

move *Lantana camara*, the other major weed that poses a threat to biodiversity in both the core and buffer zones of the Tiger Reserve.

*Senna spectabilis*, along with *Lantana camara*, is among five major invasive weeds that had taken over vast swathes of the Nilgiris, with wattle being the other major invasive species. Eucalyptus and pine, though exotic, do not spread as quickly as the other species and are considered easier to manage, Forest Department officials said.

Officials also stated that the Madras High Court was hearing petitions seeking the removal of exotic species, and that judges had inspected the Tiger Reserve this year to monitor the work in this regard.

## General Studies Paper I

A	History of Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of art forms, literature and architecture from ancient to modern times;
B	Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present-significant events, personalities, issues;
C	Freedom struggle-its various stages and important contributors / contributions from different parts of the country;
D	Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country;
E	History of the world will include events from 18 <sup>th</sup> century such as industrial revolution, world wars, re-drawing of national boundaries, colonization, decolonization,
F	Political philosophies like communism, capitalism, socialism etc.-their forms and effect on the society
G	Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India;
H	Effects of globalization on Indian society;
I	Role of women and women's organization;
J	Social empowerment, communalism, regionalism & secularism
K	Salient features of world's physical geography;
L	Geographical features and their location- changes in critical geographical features (including water bodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna and the effects of such changes;
M	Important Geophysical phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity, cyclone etc.
N	Distribution of key natural resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian subcontinent);
O	Factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India);
P	Population and associated issues;
Q	Urbanization, their problems and their remedies

## General Studies Paper II

A	India and its neighbourhood- relations;
B	Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate;
C	Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests;
D	Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.
E	Indian Constitution, historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provision and basic structure;
F	Comparison of the Indian Constitutional scheme with other countries;
G	Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein Inclusive growth and issues arising from it;
H	Parliament and State Legislatures - structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privilege and issues arising out of these;

K	Appointment to various Constitutional posts, powers, functions and responsibilities of various Constitutional bodies;
L	Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies;
M	Mechanisms, laws, institutions and bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections;
N	Salient features of the Representation of People's Act;
O	Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance- applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential;
P	Citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures;
Q	Issues relating to poverty and hunger,
R	Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States, Performance of these schemes;
S	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to education and human resources;
T	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to health
General Studies Paper III	
A	Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment;
B	Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth;
C	Inclusive growth and issues arising from it;
D	Infrastructure Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc. Government budgeting;
E	Land reforms in India
F	Major crops, cropping patterns in various parts of the country, different types of irrigation and irrigation systems;
G	Storage, transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues and related constraints;
H	e-technology in the aid of farmers; Technology Missions; Economics of Animal-Rearing.
I	Issues of buffer stocks and food security, Public Distribution System- objectives, functioning, limitations, revamping;
J	Food processing and related industries in India – scope and significance, location, upstream and downstream requirements, supply chain management;
K	Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies and minimum support prices
L	Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology;
M	Indigenization of technology and developing new technology;
N	Developments and their applications and effects in everyday life;
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P	Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment
Q	Disaster and disaster management
R	Challenges to internal security through communication networks, role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges, basics of cyber security;
S	Money-laundering and its prevention;
T	Various forces and their mandate;
U	Security challenges and their management in border areas;

V	Linkages of organized crime with terrorism;
W	Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security;
X	Linkages between development and spread of extremism.
<b>General Studies Paper IV</b>	
A	Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in human actions;
B	Dimensions of ethics;
C	Ethics in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators;
D	Role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values.
E	Attitude: Content, structure, function; its influence and relation with thought and behaviour;
F	Moral and political attitudes;
G	Social influence and persuasion.
H	Aptitude and foundational values for Civil Service , integrity, impartiality and non-partisanship, objectivity, dedication to public service, empathy, tolerance and compassion towards the weaker sections.
I	Emotional intelligence-concepts, and their utilities and application in administration and governance.
J	Contributions of moral thinkers and philosophers from India and world.
K	Public/Civil service values and Ethics in Public administration: Status and problems;
L	Ethical concerns and dilemmas in government and private institutions;
M	Laws, rules, regulations and conscience as
N	sources of ethical guidance;
O	Accountability and ethical governance; strengthening of ethical and moral values in governance; ethical issues in international relations and funding;
P	Corporate governance.
Q	Probity in Governance: Concept of public service;
R	Philosophical basis of governance and probity;
S	Information sharing and transparency in government, Right to Information, Codes of Ethics, Codes of Conduct, Citizen's Charters, Work culture, Quality of service delivery, Utilization of public funds, challenges of corruption.
T	Case Studies on above issues.